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disposition and close application to his studies have prevented him from taking a prominent part in the activities of natural history organizations, and thereby he has gained time for research which has placed to his credit a greater number of works than has been produced by any other ornithologist. With Baird and Brewer he collaborated in the production of a five-volume quarto on the "Birds of North America." This was followed by his standard "Manual of North American Birds," "Nomenclature of Colors for Naturalists," "Birds of Illinois," and "Color Standards and Color Nomenclature," a work generally accepted by naturalists throughout the world. Meanwhile he had published also some five hundred papers of varying length, and it was not until 1901 that the way was prepared for his *magnum opus*, "The Birds of Middle and North America," the eighth volume of which has won for him the award of the Daniel Giraud Elliot Medal by the National Academy of Sciences.

According to the deed of gift, the award of the Elliot Medal is made "to the author of such paper, essay or other work upon some branch of zoology or palæontology published during the year as in the opinion of the persons, or a majority of the persons, hereinafter appointed to be the judges in that regard, shall be the most meritorious and worthy of honor. . . . As science is not national the medal and diploma and surplus income may be conferred upon naturalists of any country, and as men eminent in their respective lines of scientific research will act as judges, . . . no person acting as such judge shall be deemed on that account ineligible to receive this annual gift, and the medal, diploma and surplus income may in any year be awarded to any one of the judges, if, in the opinion of his associates, he shall, by reason of the excellence of any treatise published by him during the year, be entitled to receive them." Nominations on the work of the year 1920 in zoology and palæontology should be addressed to the Home Secretary of the National Academy of Sciences, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D. C., by whom they will be forwarded to the committee on award.

HENRY FAIRFIELD OSBORN

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY,  
NEW YORK CITY, May 4, 1921

## SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

### THE UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

THE United Engineering Societies have issued a statement in regard to the situation in the United States Patent Office, calling attention to the fact that wholesale resignations are crippling the service to the point of disorganization and are creating conditions that threaten American industrial enterprise and invention. The council, through its Patents Committee, of which Edwin J. Prindle, of New York City, is chairman, reports that the situation has become almost intolerable and quotes the new commissioner of patents, Thomas E. Robertson, as saying that remedial legislation at the present session of Congress is **necessary if results approaching disruption are to be prevented.**

The council appeals for support of pending patent legislation, which provides sufficient increases in salaries to check the exodus of employees from the Patent Office to private employment. In a little over one year, 110 members of the force of examiners, numbering 437, have resigned. During the first three weeks of the Harding administration six highly trained experts left the service to accept salaries two or three times as great elsewhere. In the past year 142 of the 560 clerical workers have resigned. There are thirty clerks in the Patent office who receive only \$60 a month who would get \$1,100 a year under the new salary bill.

Commissioner Robertson is quoted as stating that the Patent Office runs one of the largest ten-cent stores in the world. The enterprise has as its stock about 75,000,000 copies of about 1,500,000 patents, and new patents at the rate of from 600 to 1,000 a week add 50,000 more copies to be taken care of each week. Many patent copies are sold for a dime apiece during the year. There is a stenographic department handling legal work that turned out 13,000,000 words in the past year and brought in \$62,000 revenue.

It is the opinion of the engineering, research and manufacturing associations of the United States that the scientific and industrial interests of the country are being jeopardized by

Patent Office conditions. The National Research Council, the American Chemical Society and the National Association of Manufacturers are among the organizations advocating Patent Office relief.

#### THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

BECAUSE of their important service "for the increase and diffusion of geographic knowledge" the following members of the National Geographic Society have been awarded life memberships, under the provisions of the Jane M. Smith Fund:

R. G. McConnell, of Ottawa, Canada, for his distinguished service to geography in Canadian exploration.

Frank M. Chapman, of New York City, for his researches in ornithology with special reference to the geographic distribution of animal life.

Herbert E. Gregory, of New Haven, Connecticut, for his important original contributions to geographic science.

Donald B. MacMillan, of Freeport, Maine, for his additions to geographic knowledge through Arctic exploration.

J. B. Tyrrell, of Toronto, Canada, for his journeys and reports of exploration and discovery in the wilderness of northwestern Canada.

The National Geographic Society will begin explorations and studies this summer of the Pueblo Bonito and Pueblo del Arroyo ruins in the Chaco Canyon of Northwestern New Mexico. It was decided to study these ruins following a report to Dr. Gilbert Grosvenor, president of the society, and its research committee, headed by Frederick V. Coville, by a reconnaissance party which visited the Canyon last summer (1920). The expedition will be led by Neil M. Judd, who has been a member of many expeditions to the American Southwest. The populous habitation of the Canyon in pre-Columbian times presents numerous geographical problems involving the relation of a specialized environment to a people whose traces indicate numerous special characteristics. Not only will the architecture and ceramic remains be studied, but experts in desert flora and geology will accompany the expedition. It is yet to be determined whether the climate conditions have changed or whether

the canyon agriculturists had an irrigation system for their crops of beans, corn and squash.

#### EXCHANGE OF PROFESSORS OF ENGINEERING BETWEEN AMERICAN AND FRENCH UNIVERSITIES

THERE has been for some time a regular annual exchange of professors between individual universities in France and America in regular academic fields, such as literature, history, law, fine arts, economics, etc., but no such exchange in engineering or applied science. These subjects are taught in France under special faculties, not included in existing exchanges with America. Furthermore, the French methods of teaching these subjects are unlike our American methods, for various reasons, based on the history, traditions and sociology of the two countries. The war showed the importance of engineering in production and distribution, and the many ties of friendship which bind us to France depend in various ways, upon applied science. It should therefore, be to the mutual advantage of France and America to become better acquainted with each other's ideals and viewpoints, in the study and in the teaching of these subjects.

With these purposes in mind, the late Dr. R. C. Maclaurin, in 1919, as president of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, consulted the presidents of six universities on or near the Atlantic seaboard, as to whether they deemed it desirable to cooperate in a joint exchange of professors with France, on a plan definitely outlined. Their replies being favorable to the project, a committee was appointed, with one member from each of the seven institutions, to report on the plan, and on methods of carrying it into effect. The committee met in December, 1919, and ratified the co-operative plan with some few modifications. The present president of the committee is Director Russell H. Chittenden, of Yale University, and its secretary Dean J. B. Whitehead of the Johns Hopkins University.

Since the Institute of International Education, in New York, concerns itself with the interchange of college students and teachers